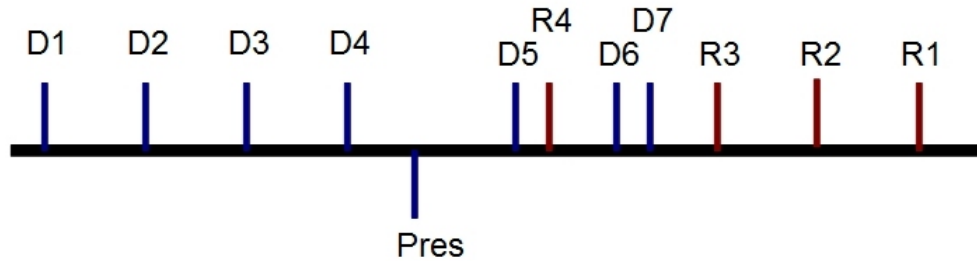# Gov 1310 – Final Exam

April 26, 2012

1 Exam Protocol

- Students will submit their exams using the "Exam Dropbox" found on the front page of the course site. Students are responsible for ensuring that their exam has been properly uploaded. Paper copies of the exam are not required. Please place your last name in the file name. For example, "`Platt Exam.docx`".

- The exam is due by **5pm (eastern standard time) on Thursday, May 3, 2012**.

- The exam is completely open book, open note, open internet, etc. However, in all other regards, this should fall under similar guidelines that apply to in-class exams. More specifically, students may not discuss the exam with others – this includes resident tutors, writing centers, etc.

- The exam dropbox closes at the date and time specified above. All exams that have not been received by this point are considered late, so those exams should be emailed directly to the professor. **Do not email your TF asking for an extension. Only Prof. Platt can grant an extension (but he probably will not).** Professor Platt will reply to any emailed exams to acknowledge their receipt. If you do not receive such an acknowledgement in a reasonable period of time, then you should not assume that your email has been received.

- REPEAT: Exams that have not been submitted to the dropbox or emailed to Professor Platt will be counted as late (see the syllabus for the late work policy). If your exam is not in the dropbox and only the TF has the exam, then the exam will still be counted as late until Professor Platt has received it via email.

Figure 1: Members' Ideal Points in a Legislature

2 Short Answer

Students should answer all of the short answer questions below. Using in-text citations to support your answers is highly recommended. This provides the reader with a better understanding of your thought process. The point values for each question are in the brackets. *Students should note that questions 1(d) and 4 are for extra credit. Unlike regular questions, partial credit will not be awarded for these questions. If they are answered correctly, then you get all of the bonus points. If not, then you get none of the bonus points but do not suffer any grade penalty.*

1. Figure 1 illustrates members' ideal points along the liberal-conservative policy dimension that generally summarizes voting behavior in Congress. The ideal point of the president is also included. Blue ideal points represent the majority party and red ideal points are for the minority party. Use Figure 1 to answer the following questions:

   (a) **[1 pts]** Identify all of the ranges (ie. D1-R1, R3-R2, etc.) in the policy space such that the pivotal politics model predicts a possible change to a status quo in that range.

   (b) **[3 pts]** Based on Figure 1, would divided government increase gridlock? Explain.

   (c) **[3 pts]** Legislator D7 is the most senior member of his committee. Under the procedural cartel model, should D7 be appointed as a committee chair? Explain.

   (d) **[Bonus 3 pts]** Based on your knowledge of the budget process in Congress, devise a legislative strategy that would provide leverage for passing policy that changes a status quo in the range D4-R4.

2. Assume that the legislature in Figure 1 is the House of Representatives. You are the Speaker of the House. You have been tasked with passing the president's agenda – a set of policies that are closer to the president and the majority of your party rather than the median voter.

   (a) **[1 pts]** Identify a range of status quos in the policy space such that you would be able to assemble enough votes to change policy to the range D4-D5. Assume that you have the procedural tools to make this happen.

   (b) **[3 pts]** Explain your answer to 2(a) and identify the members of your voting coalition. Assume that you have the procedural tools to make this happen.

(c) [**3 pts**] Using the procedures/rules of the House, devise a strategy to achieve this non-median outcome.

(d) [**3 pts**] Is the strategy that you outlined in 2(c) sustainable over an entire congress? Explain what could threaten against the continued use of this strategy.

3. Based on the alignment of preferences depicted in Figure 1, pundits are saying that Democrats are overextended. They argue that there should be a natural correction in the next election that allows the current minority party to become the majority party in the new Congress.

(a) [**2 pts**] Assuming that the pundits are correct, would this be classified as a "wave election"? Why or why not?

(b) [**3 pts**] Identify the most vulnerable legislators under this scenario. What changes, if any, should we expect in their legislative behavior? Explain.

(c) [**3 pts**] Assume that legislator preferences (as depicted in Figure 1) are congruent with district preferences, and conservative districts are more likely to vote Republican. You are a conservative state senator from Legislator D6's district. What information should you gather in order to make the best decision about whether to challenge the incumbent in the next election?

4. [**Bonus 4 pts**] Describe two developments in the history of Congress that ostensibly gave individual MCs in the House greater freedom and/or control but ultimately centralized power in the hands of party leadership.

3 Essay (25 pts)

Write a concise essay in response to the prompt below. The response will be judged on how well it draws on the course materials to make an argument. Merely summarizing the readings will not be considered an appropriate response. The best essays will 1) provide clear, concise arguments that directly engage with the question/prompt; and 2) demonstrate a firm understanding of the course material.

3.1 Format

- Essays should be 2-4 typed, double-spaced pages with standard fonts and margins. Students should include a list of works cited, but that does not count against the page limit.

- Students are expected to provide citations (according to APSA format) to substantiate their claims (block quotations are discouraged). If the course lecture itself is the source, then students should use the following: "(Platt 2012)".

3.2 Question

Do interest groups make Congress more or less representative as an institution? Your argument should include a discussion of how money and information shape the policy process. In addition, discuss whether the relationship between interest groups and representation has changed over time.